

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, Republicans have promised a lot lately. We promised to make Congress subject to the same laws that the rest of the American people have to live with. We kept that promise. We promised to give the American people a balanced budget amendment. We kept that promise. We promised to put an end to burdensome unfunded mandates, and we kept that promise.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans are keeping every single promise we have made to the American people. Today we will fulfill another promise by voting and passing the line-item veto.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make one more promise. Seven years ago President Ronald Reagan delivered his final State of the Union Address. He asked Congress to give the future Presidents the line-item veto. He would not have it, but he was asking for the American people and for every President to come after him to have that opportunity.

I promise to him on his 84th birthday today that we will give the President of the United States the line-item veto. I ask my colleagues to vote in favor of that today.

CONGRESS MUST RESTORE THE 25-PERCENT DEDUCTION FOR HEALTH CARE EXPENSES TO FARMERS AND SMALL BUSINESS PEOPLE

(Mr. GANSKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, I am going to vote today for the line-item veto. Two summers ago in the State of Iowa when we had floods, we saw the disaster bill pay for courthouses in New York and strips of highway in West Virginia. However, I want to address another issue, also. I rise today to express the frustration of the people of Iowa over the failure of this body to restore the 25-percent deduction for health care expenses for self-employed individuals.

America's farmers, the heart and soul of this Nation, do not qualify for the same tax deduction for health care expenses which are available to employees of large corporations. Instead, they are provided with only a thin 25-percent deduction, and that expired at the end of 1993. Congress has still failed to take the steps necessary to restore this.

Mr. Speaker, farmers and other self-employed individuals across the State of Iowa and the rest of America are waiting for this important tax provision to be extended. At a time when every Member of Congress is working to expand this health care insurance, we must make this available again.

URGING CONGRESS TO DO JUSTICE TO RONALD REAGAN'S BIRTHDAY AND PASS A STRONG LINE-ITEM VETO

(Mr. ROTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, I want to join all of our colleagues this afternoon who have endorsed the line-item veto and are going to be voting for it today. I think it is important to recall the exact words of President Reagan when he was here January 21, 1988, and asked the House to do that. He said:

Let's help ensure our future prosperity by giving the President a tool that, though I will not get to use it, is one I know future Presidents of either party must have.

Give the President the same authority that 43 Governors use in their States: The right to reach into massive appropriation bills, pare away the waste, and enforce budget discipline. Let's approve the line-item veto.

Today we are going to carry that through on the President's wishes. Mr. Speaker, the line-item veto is an invaluable instrument in the arsenal to cut Government spending, and an absolute necessity to give the Congress the discipline we need to change the spending culture in Washington.

I applaud my colleagues for putting forth the hard work and finally bringing us to the line-item veto which we will face today.

KEEP MOVING FORWARD ON THE CONTRACT—SUPPORT THE LINE-ITEM VETO

(Mr. LATHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to encourage my colleagues to take the next step forward on fulfilling the Contract With America and approve the Presidential line-item veto.

During meetings with constituents over the last several weeks, I have been extremely pleased to hear their message. They say "We see you working hard, making real changes and keeping your promises, and we like what we are watching."

The line-item veto is the next step in making it harder for Congress to tax, spend and pile up debt. Asking the President to cut unnecessary spending without line-item veto is like asking a surgeon to do this work with a meat ax. His prospects for success are so slim, the most likely result is that he will not take the chance. That is why we need to provide him with a precision instrument, the line-item veto.

Members of Congress should not be afraid of the line-item veto or any other tool that increases accountability. By making ourselves more accountable, we are winning back the people's trust. And that is the most important tool in any democracy.

RAISING SPENDING IS NOT A SPENDING CUT

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, in President Clinton's State of the Union that he gave just about 2 weeks ago in this Chamber, this is what he said: "Should we cut the deficit more? Well, of course we should." As many of the Members will remember, that was a great line, and many a lot of us applauded. However, his 1996 fiscal year budget came in, and the question is, why did he not?

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, does the Clinton administration still have as its highest priority reduced spending? Not only does his budget ring up almost \$200 billion in deficit for fiscal year 1996, but it projects deficits of almost \$200 billion every year to the year 2005. It uses the same old accounting gimmicks that we have seen before, and it claims \$144 billion in cuts in Federal spending over 5 years. The reality is that in fiscal year 1996 alone, the administration proposed increasing spending by \$50 billion.

Mr. Speaker, do we have to say it again? Raising spending by less than we plan is not a spending cut.

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S BUDGET INCREASES THE DEFICIT

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress were given the President's budget today, and once we look at that budget, I hope every Member, Republican and Democrat, as well as the American people, will be as upset as I am as I have gone through this budget.

Here is what I see: Spending every year goes up faster than inflation. Even the so-called reductions are gimmick accounting. They are not truly reductions.

Let me tell the Members what happens to the national debt.

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At the end of 1994, the national public debt of this country was \$4.6 trillion. This budget, by the year 2000, increases the debt to \$6.67 trillion, from \$4.6 to \$6.67 trillion in this 5-year period. Ladies and gentlemen, the interest on the public debt this year is going to be \$339 billion. That is 25 percent of all revenues coming into the Federal Government.

We have to do it better. Let us do it.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives: